

what is claimed is:

1. An artificial airway device to facilitate lung ventilation in an unconscious patient, comprising an airway tube and a mask carried at one end of the airway tube, the mask having a flexible annular peripheral formation of roughly elliptical shape capable of conforming to and of readily fitting within the actual and potential space behind the larynx so as to form a seal around the circumference of the laryngeal inlet without the device penetrating into the interior of the larynx, the annular peripheral formation surrounding a hollow interior space or lumen of the mask into which the airway tube opens, wherein the artificial airway device further comprises a drainage tube having one end region arranged for insertion with the mask and the other end capable of being positioned below the patient for extracting fluid from the area of the mask by syphonic action, or of being connected to suction apparatus for extracting such fluid by suction.
2. An artificial airway device according to claim 1 wherein the annular peripheral formation carries a soft flexible upstanding collar surrounding the lumen of the mask.
3. An artificial airway device according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the drainage tube is of a smaller diameter than the airway tube so that it may be accommodated in the airway tube and wherein said one end region opens into the lumen of the mask.
4. An artificial airway device according to claim 2 wherein the said one end region of the drainage tube is forked and is adhered to the outside of a part of the periphery of the upstanding collar, with openings of the

fork portions being arranged to extract fluid from the area around the exterior of the mask.

5. An artificial airway device according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the said one end region of the drainage tube extends past the distal end of the mask so as to pass through the upper oesophageal sphincter muscle when the mask is in use in a patient, the drainage tube being bifurcated at the distal end of the mask to provide fork portions lying adjacent respective lateral posterior surfaces of the flexible annular peripheral formation.

6. An artificial airway device according to claim 5 wherein an inflatable cuff is provided around the region of the drainage tube which will lie in the oesophagus below the sphincter muscle when the mask is in use in a patient.

7. An artificial airway device as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the said one end region of the drainage tube extends as far as the distal end of the mask so that its opening lies against, but does not pass through, the upper oesophageal sphincter muscle when the mask is in use in a patient.

8. An artificial airway device to facilitate lung ventilation in an unconscious patient, comprising an airway tube and a mask carried at one end of the airway tube, the mask having a flexible annular peripheral formation of roughly elliptical shape capable of conforming to, and of readily fitting within, the actual and potential space behind the larynx so as to form a seal around the circumference of the laryngeal inlet without the device penetrating into the interior of the larynx, the annular peripheral formation surrounding a

hollow interior space or lumen of the mask into which the airway tube opens, characterised in that the annular peripheral formation carries a soft, flexible, upstanding collar surrounding the lumen of the mask so as to improve the sealing contact with the tissues around the circumference of the laryngeal inlet.

9. An artificial airway device according to claim 8 wherein the collar is formed of a flexible sheet material, and is adhered at its base to the adjacent surface of the annular peripheral formation.

10. An artificial airway device according to claim 1 or 8 wherein the flexible annular peripheral formation is inflatable.

11. An artificial airway device according to claim 10 wherein the inflatable peripheral formation is formed as a tubular ring and the collar is curved, as seen in cross-section, in the reverse sense to the walls of the tubular ring, so that the base of the collar is parallel to the adjacent surface of the ring and its free end extends away from the lumen of the mask.

12. An artificial airway device according to claim 11 wherein the tubular ring and collar are made of a silicone rubber sheet material of similar thickness to one another.

13. An artificial airway device according to claim 8 wherein two or more of said soft, flexible upstanding collars are carried by the annular peripheral formation and surround the lumen of the mask.